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draft

At the time of Stalin's death we estimated that his successor, Malenkov, or the triumvirate of Malenkov, Beria and Molotov would initially play a waiting and cautious game. We assumed that they would be unusually sensitive to any moves by the Free World which they might consider as probing efforts to determine the possible points of weakness of the new regime and that probably until the real power was assumed by one strong man, presumably either Malenkov or Beria, the future line of Soviet policy would not clearly manifest itself. We had also assumed that the new regime would try to bask in the aura of the dead Stalin as a method of retaining not only possible support at home but the control of possibly uneasy satellites.

The recent series of moves seems to belie many of these predictions. The new regime has moved on two fronts - the international front with a peace offensive and the internal front with amnesia, the repudiation of the former ~~the~~ regime's doctors' plot and the apparent tendency to ignore the memory of Stalin in

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official pronouncements.

On the international front the following steps have been taken:

- (1) The acceptance in principle of the proposal with regard to the exchange of sick and wounded in Korea.
  - (2) Chou En Li's statement practically accepting the Indian proposal for a Korean Armistice obviously prepared in Moscow and delivered immediately after his return.
  - (3) The proposal with regard to disarmament and extension of atomic controls; the two power later expanded to four power discussions in Berlin regarding air safety.
  - (4) The release of French and British internees in Korea, and agreement to take up with North Koreans the case of American interned civilians in North Korea.
  - (5) Of recognition that US and UK participated in winning the last war, and finally a series of smaller gestures of "friendship."
- These international gestures are part of a long expected peace offensive but one which came sooner than anticipated as many of

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these gestures definitely reversed Stalinist policies, particularly the acceptance of the Indian resolution.

The possible gains to the Soviet from a peace offensive are fairly obvious particularly in their influence on our European Allies. Ratification of EDC is made much less likely and the way is possibly prepared for more far reaching proposals which might bear upon something like the neutralization of Germany and Japan and to force the to prevent the rearmament of these two countries/ This of course withdrawal of American troops from Europe and Asia. is purely speculative but might be on the cards. If these gestures prove to have substance, and only time can tell, it is reasonable to speculate that they stem from the Soviet desire to avoid war for the time being. All our estimates have been unanimous in the view that the Soviet Union would not now desire to provoke or to become involved in a general war. It is reasonable to speculate that the one area where the Soviet felt that ~~efforts~~ <sup>events</sup> might lead toward war was in the Korean area in the event that the United States made a determined effort to win a victory in this theatre

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and thereby enlarge the war. If so the Soviet might be faced with the alternative of deserting its Chinese Ally or of direct intervention which might lead to general war. The measures taken to bring about an Armistice may well be calculated to put aside this danger, a danger which the recent moves of the Armistice may have seemed very real to the Soviet, particularly the change in the orders to the Fleet respecting Formosa. The Soviet technique in this respect is more understandable if one accepts the hypothesis and probably the Soviet leaders do, that American and possibly European rearmament, American air bases, and a vigorous American foreign policy represent a real and immediate threat.

It is too early to state whether this hypothesis is correct but it is at least worth pondering.

The internal moves, particularly the reversal of the doctors' plot theme are much more puzzling. It would seem that something was happening within the Soviet Union from the viewpoint of policy

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and possibly a break with the past which is comparable only to the change that took place in 1939. Stalin has been reversed and to some extent repudiated. Communist broadcasts in recent days make little reference to the dead leader, the emphasis is on the party, very largely to the exclusion of Malenkov or any other Kremlin leader. The idea that everything has gone smooth and easily with regard to the succession, in fact that the succession itself is clearly determined may have to be revised. It is suggested that the new regime was under certain internal pressures which we do not usually associate with Soviet developments, or possibly that the Army has become dissatisfied with the inroads of the MGB and is really taking over a measure of control or has assumed the position of arbiter. In this situation it is interesting to compare the Soviet messages to the outside world with their internal propaganda. Under their system it is possible to tell one story to the outside world, another to their own people. In the present situation the peace theme has not been particularly stressed in the internal

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propaganda. The Korean Armistice proposals have been briefly presented but without comment. The peace offensive elements of the move have not been stressed. However, anti-American propaganda has declined in recent days. The amnesia has been given wide currency and also the action with regard to the doctors' plot.

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